

2014

POST-SESSION LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM REPORT

CITY OF ROANOKE



ROANOKE LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

- ✓ On I-73: Senate Resolution 32 (Stanley) directs the Senate Committees on Local Government and Transportation to study construction of proposed I-73
 - City Manager Chris Morrill was appointed as local government representative
 - Other Members: Senators Newman, Ruff, Deeds, Smith, Stanley, Carrico and citizen members Ben Davenport of Danville, George Lester of Martinsville and Dana Martin and William Fralin of Roanoke
- ✓ On Parking Management: HB 369 (Head) was passed to provide Roanoke the ability to contract parking management to improve government efficiency
- ✓ On posting public notices on locality's website: HB 95 (Head) and SB 472 (Smith) failed to be reported from committee
- ✓ No changes were made to the tax code relative to BPOL or M&T taxes
- ✓ No bill relating to tax amnesty programs were introduced for lack of a patron

ROANOKE LEGISLATIVE AGENDA, CONT.

- ✓ On streamlining the eviction process by creating an exigent eviction process: SB 354 (Edwards) and HB 372 (Head) were both left in committee; SB 354 was referred to the Virginia Housing Commission for further study; HB 372 was opposed because members felt that there were already sufficient remedies in the Act
- ✓ On clean-up fees for meth labs: SB 31 passed the General Assembly and requires the Board of Health, in consultation with the Department of Environmental Quality and other entities, to develop guidelines for certification that a residential property or building that was previously a methamphetamine manufacturing site has a methamphetamine level that is at or below the post clean up target. In addition, the bill requires a person convicted of manufacturing methamphetamine to pay the cost of the certification. Current law requires the convicted person to pay cleanup costs.
- ✓ On Sabrina's Place: HB 1 (Comstock) would, among other items, examine current grant funding structures at state agencies for federal and state funds used to support sexual and domestic violence service agencies and review the grant applications, administration, and reporting processes required of local sexual and domestic violence agencies. The bill also provided for recommending a comprehensive and streamlined grant funding process for a more efficient funding structure to best serve the victims of sexual and domestic violence while ensuring compliance with federal requirements

ROANOKE LEGISLATIVE AGENDA: EDUCATION

- ✓ On Standards of Learning testing: SB 144 (Edwards) and HB 365 (Head) would have required that all revisions to any Standards of Learning assessment are finalized by December 31 of the school year prior to the school year in which the revised assessment is administered
 - The legislation was moving briskly through the General Assembly until a fiscal impact statement claiming a \$12.4 Million fiscal impact was created by the Department of Education at the last minute effectively killing the legislation
- ✓ On school start date: SB 637 (Smith) would have required the Board of Education to waive the requirement that a local school board set the first day students are required to attend school to be after Labor Day for any local school board that was granted a "good cause" waiver of this requirement for the 2011-2012 school year; the bill passed Senate Education and Health, but was referred to and left in Senate Finance; HB 42 (Habeeb) is similar and failed to report from House Education
- ✓ On Standards of Learning Reform: HB 930 (Greason) and SB 306 (Deeds) provides that SOL assessments shall not exceed 17 assessments in grades 3 through 8; the bill also requires the Secretary of Education to establish the Standards of Learning Innovation Committee to periodically review the Standards of Learning and assessments

2014 GENERAL ASSEMBLY: TRANSPORTATION

- ✓ The General Assembly repealed the hybrid vehicle fee that has been included as part of the 2013 transportation funding bill (HB 2313)
- ✓ House Bill 2 (Stolle) provides for the development of a prioritization process for projects funded by the Commonwealth Transportation Board; such prioritization shall weight factors such as congestion mitigation, economic development, accessibility, safety, and environmental quality and be applied within each highway construction district
- ✓ House Bill 733 (Lingamfelter) allows localities to regulate and enforce parking in front of residential mailboxes
- ✓ Senate Bill 194 (Black) provides that the "date of valuation" of property in an inverse condemnation proceeding is the date determined by the court to be the date the property was taken or damaged.

2014 GENERAL ASSEMBLY: ETHICS

- ✓ The General Assembly passed a new ethics law (HB 1211, Gilbert and SB 649, Norment)
 - Establishes the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Advisory Council; will provide advisory opinions
 - Require disclosure statements of government officials and lobbyists to be filed twice a year (currently once)
 - Prohibits tangible gifts valued at more than \$250 in value
 - No limit on intangible gifts, but they must be reported
 - Gifts to dependent family members must be disclosed
 - Lowers threshold for financial disclosure to \$5,000 from \$10,000

2014 GENERAL ASSEMBLY: MENTAL HEALTH

- ✓ The General Assembly passed what promises to be the first of several new laws to reform the mental health care delivery system (SB 260, Deeds)
 - Lengthens duration of emergency custody orders from 4 to 8 hours
 - Lengthens duration of time for a court hearing from the time of a temporary detention orders from 48 hours to 72 hours
 - DBHDS will establish an acute psychiatric bed registry that provides real time information on the availability of beds in several patient settings
 - State hospitals with mental health beds will become the hospital of last resort – no one will be released from custody because of a lack of a hospital bed
 - The bill ensures communications and notification among law enforcement, mental health providers and CSBs

2014 GENERAL ASSEMBLY: OTHER ISSUES

✓ The General Assembly:

- Defeated legislation to move Botetourt, Roanoke city and county and Salem from the VTC's Shenandoah Valley Tourism Region to the Blue Ridge Highlands Region
- (Finally) funded the construction of a new General Assembly Building (HB 5001); delivered in 2019
- Passed Sunday hunting on private property with written permission of the landowner (SB 154)
- Passed legislation to clarify religious uses for which religious institutions qualify for a real estate tax exemption (HB 156)
- Continued to next year legislation relating to municipal net metering which can reduce a municipalities energy costs

2014 GENERAL ASSEMBLY: UNRESOLVED ISSUES & FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

- State Budget has not been passed; total impasse at this time
- Numerous judicial vacancies remain to be filled
- CTB SYIP: 2 key projects – fund Orange Avenue improvements and Valley View interchange extension
- Continue progress on passenger rail platform work with DRPT
- I-73 Study provides opportunity to talk about funding the project